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ABSTRACT

Students whose primary language is not English and who are of limited English proficiency are an increasing percentage of North Carolina's school population at all grade levels and in all parts of the state. These guidelines are designed to clarify their participation in the statewide testing program. This program includes the end-of-grade tests for grades three through eight, the end-of-course test for high school courses, and the computer proficiency and competency tests that will become graduation requirements. Off-grade level testing is not allowed, and tests must be administered with English instructions, although students are allowed to use dictionaries or electronic translators during the test. Conditions under which students are exempt from testing are outlined. How to determine whether a student is limited English proficient is reviewed, and testing recommendations are made to assure appropriate student placement and testing. Modifications are allowed to ensure equal opportunity to all students, but special arrangements or modifications must not be used for score enhancement. Five appendixes present a home language survey, English proficiency level descriptions, a list of resources, the testing code of ethics, and annual performance goals for students. (Contains two references.) (SLD)

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Guidelines For Testing Students With Limited English Proficiency

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North Carolina Statewide Testing Program Grades 3-12

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Public Schools of North Carolina
State Board of Education • Jay Robinson, Chairman
Department of Public Instruction • Bob Etheridge, State Superintendent
Office of Instructional and Accountability Services
Division of Accountability

Guidelines for Testing Students With Limited English Proficiency

North Carolina Statewide Testing Program Grades 3-12

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Introduction

The new ABCs of Public Education is a comprehensive plan to reorganize public schools in North Carolina and the result of 1995 legislation. The new ABCs focus on strong accountability; a strong emphasis on the basics and on high educational standards; and maximum local control. Part of the new ABCs is a change in the state-mandated testing program. In grades 3-8, students will take end-of-grade reading and mathematics tests. End-of-course required tests are Algebra I, English I, US History, ELP, and Biology. Writing tests are mandated for grades 4, 7, and 10 (English II). Beginning in 1996-97, open-ended tests will be given at grades 5 and 8. A computer proficiency requirement is mandated for students graduating in 2001 and thereafter. A competency requirement in reading and mathematics must be met by all students graduating from public schools in North Carolina. The mandated tests are state-developed, adopted by the State Board of Education for measuring student, school, and system achievement in reading, mathematics, writing, and computer proficiency.

Students whose primary language is not English and who are of limited English proficiency represent a steadily increasing percentage of North Carolina's school population and are found at all grade levels, in urban, suburban, and rural communities across the state. Federal statutes require that school systems provide an equal educational opportunity for all students, including those of limited English proficiency. School administrators, therefore, must address the testing of limited English proficient students. The ***English as a Second Language Resource Guide*** was published by the Department of Public Instruction in March 1995 to assist school personnel in providing a quality educational program for these students. ***Guidelines for Testing Students with Limited English Proficiency*** should clarify their participation in the statewide testing program.

State-Mandated Testing Program

End-of-Grade Tests. The end-of-grade tests (grades 3-8) measure student achievement of grade-level competencies with a focus on basic skills and content standards. The North Carolina content standards are closely aligned with national curriculum standards.

NC Test of Reading Comprehension (Grades 3-8)

Reading is assessed by having students read authentic passages and then answer questions directly related to the passages. Knowledge of vocabulary is assessed indirectly through application and understanding of terms within the context of passages and questions.

NC Test of Mathematics (Grades 3-8)

Mathematics tests assess students' ability in the seven strands of the mathematics curriculum: numeration, geometry, patterns and pre-algebra, measurement, problem-solving, data analysis and statistics, and computation. The test contains two parts, a computation section and an applications section. Students may use a calculator for the applications section only.

Open-Ended Tests (Grades 5 and 8)

Open-ended test questions are usually broader than multiple-choice test questions and commonly require integration of knowledge and skills from more than one curricular goal or objective. Students must generate their own answers and write out their thoughts. The students are required to analyze, explain, interpret, and evaluate.

Writing Assessment (Grades 4 and 7)

The writing essays for grades 4 and 7 measure written expression skills, such as main idea, supportive details, organization, coherence, and grammatical conventions. Students in grade four write a narrative essay which may be personal or imaginative. Students in the seventh grade write a descriptive or expository essay.

End-of-Course Tests. The end-of-course tests are designed to assess the curriculum defined by the North Carolina *Standard Course of Study*. Testing is required for English I, Biology, Algebra I, US History, English II, and ELP.

NC Test of Algebra I

The NC Test of Algebra I assesses the three broad topics of the Algebra I curriculum: simple equations, graphing, and multi-step problems. The test is divided into a calculator-active and a calculator-inactive section. Graphing calculators are permitted during the calculator active part of the test.

NC Test of Biology

The NC Test of Biology assesses the eight goals of the biology curriculum, with the exception of Goal 4: "Attitudes Towards Science." Students are expected to have knowledge of important principles and concepts, to understand and interpret laboratory activities, and to relate scientific information to everyday situations.

NC Test of Economic, Legal, and Political Systems (ELP)

The ELP test assesses the Economic, Legal and Political Systems curriculum. Goals include understanding the function and importance of both the North Carolina and United States Constitutions; knowing the features of the economic system of the United States and factors that influence its economy; and understanding why laws are needed and how they are enacted, implemented, and enforced.

NC Test of English I

The NC Test of English I assesses three strands of the English and language arts curriculum (reading, viewing, and writing). Tasks include editing and revising for conventions and textual analysis. Editing and revising are presented as peer editing of short student essays. Students must edit for sentence formation, usage, mechanics, and spelling. For textual analysis, students read several passages from various genres, including literary, informational, and practical texts. Based on the reading passages, students answer questions which focus on the application of literary terms and elements.

NC Test of English II

The English II test assesses students' mastery of the writing strand of the English and language arts curriculum, their application of grammatical skills, and achievement in literary analysis.

NC Test of US History

The history test assesses the US History curriculum. Students are expected to have knowledge of important ideas and concepts, to understand and interpret events in history, and to connect historical people and events across time. Many items ask the students to analyze primary and secondary source documents.

Computer Proficiency and Competency Requirements. The North Carolina Test of Computer Skills and the competency tests are additional components of the statewide testing program. Students must meet a computer proficiency and pass the competency tests as part of North Carolina graduation requirements.

Computer Proficiency Requirement

The overall goal for the curriculum and test is: "Students are [to be] independent users of technology for school and personal needs." Like other state-mandated tests, the computer skills test is aligned with the computer skills curriculum. The test has both a multiple-choice and performance part. The test is administered at grade 8, beginning with the class of 2001. Students must meet a computer proficiency requirement for graduation.

Competency Tests

There are currently two competency standards. Students who enter the ninth grade beginning with the 1994-95 school year (and thereafter) are subject to the new competency requirements (reading and mathematics). This standard is equivalent to Level III on the 8th grade reading and mathematics end-of-grade tests. Students who do not perform at level III on the reading and mathematics tests at grade 8 must pass the new competency tests in high school to meet the standard. Students who entered the ninth grade prior to the 1994-95 school year are subject to the old competency standards and must pass the old reading, mathematics, and writing objective tests to meet graduation requirements, regardless of when they graduate.

General Guidelines

The North Carolina Statewide Testing Program is implemented in order to assist school personnel in making sound educational decisions based on students' abilities and needs, and, in most cases, to provide information for the state accountability program. The following general guidelines apply for students who are limited English proficient.

Off-grade level testing is not allowed.

- The grade level of testing should be determined by the grade placement of each student. For example, a student who has been retained in the third grade should be tested using the grade 3 tests. Off-grade level testing is not allowed.

Exemptions

- Limited English proficient students may be exempted from one subject test and be tested on the others. For example, a student may be tested in math and exempted from the writing essay test. All completed tests must be scored and included with the other tests at the appropriate grade level. Exemptions are based on current level of English language proficiency. Students may be exempted for up to two school years.

Competency Tests and Exemptions

- If a student is exempted from the Competency Tests, a statement indicating that the consequences of the exemption (i.e. not graduating with a diploma) have been fully explained in the student's home language and shall be signed by the parent, guardian, surrogate parent, or student (18 years of age or older). It may be necessary for the school to obtain the services of an interpreter or a translator.
- The signed statement shall become a part of the student's permanent educational record.

North Carolina *Standard Course of Study* Courses and Course Codes

- Students who are not following the North Carolina Standard Course of Study must be assigned high school state course codes different from those students assigned to courses that do follow the Standard Course of Study. Careful consideration must be given to the assignment of these codes and of students to curses. For example, biology is a course that is required for graduation with a high school diploma beginning with the ninth-grade class of 1992-93.

The Quality Assurance Program and Graduation Requirements

- The first phase of the Quality Assurance Program, which began with 1992-93 freshmen, will affect graduation requirements. The student and the parent, guardian, or surrogate parent must be notified in their home language about the consequences of taking courses that do not follow the North Carolina Standard Course of Study when the Standard Course of Study course is required for graduation. It may be necessary for the school to secure the services of an interpreter in order to ensure clear understanding of these consequences.
- When students are enrolled in courses that do not follow the North Carolina Standard Course of Study, a statement in the home language should be signed by the parent, guardian, surrogate parent, or student (18 years or older).

Frequently Used Terminology

English Language Proficiency Descriptions

English Proficiency Level Descriptions are a recognized method of describing a person's proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The proficiency levels are Novice Low, Novice High, Intermediate Low, Intermediate High, Advanced, and Superior.

ESL

English as a Second Language (ESL) is a common instructional program model in which the primary language of instruction is English.

Language Minority (or) National Origin Minority

A language minority or national origin minority student is one who speaks a language other than English as his/her first or native language and who may or may not be proficient in English.

Language minority/national origin minority students must have their English language proficiency assessed before they can be identified as being limited English proficient.

Limited English Proficient (LEP)

According to the *Federal Register* definition adopted by the State, a limited English proficient student is any student whose primary language is other than English and who is insufficiently proficient in the English language to receive instruction exclusively from regular educational programs and to function on an academic par with his/her peers. According to the Bilingual Education Act of 1968, amended in 1988 (P.L. 100-297) a limited English proficient student is one who:

a. meets one or more of the following conditions:

   i. the student was born outside of the United States or whose native language is not English;

   ii. the student comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; or

   iii. the student is American or Alaskan Native and comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on his/her level of English language proficiency;

<u>and</u>

b. has sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language to deny him or her the opportunity to learn successfully in English-only classrooms.

Exemptions

Exemptions refer to students who are excluded from a state-mandated test, according to state testing guidelines.

Steps in Determining if a Student is Limited English Proficient

Initial Screening Process

1. All students' language backgrounds shall be determined at the time of enrollment through the use of the *Home Language Survey*. If the answer to all four questions on the *Home (Primary) Language Survey* is "English," the student should be considered English language proficient and no further action is needed. (See a copy of the *Home Language Survey* in the Appendix.)

2. If the answer to **any one** of the four questions on the survey is a language other than English, the student should be considered to be a language minority student and should be referred for further English language assessment in listening, speaking, reading, and writing to determine if he or she is limited English proficient.

Language Program Participation

- A student who has a current English proficiency rating lower than **Intermediate/High**, i.e. Novice/Low to Intermediate/Low, is clearly a candidate for participation in an alternative language service program (for example, English as a Second Language program, bilingual program models, etc.). Students scoring Intermediate/High or Advanced may also need English language assistance in some areas. (See the English Proficiency Levels in the Appendix and in *English as a Second Language Resource Guide*, March 1995 for further information on program placement.)

Testing Recommendations

Novice/Low to Intermediate Low English Proficiency

- A student whose documented English language proficiency has been assessed as Novice/Low to Intermediate/Low in listening, reading, and writing may be exempted from statewide standardized testing by the same school system for **up to two school years from time of enrollment in the school system.** However, if there is a test or tests on which the student would be able to perform, such as mathematics, the student may be tested. All completed tests must be scored and included with the other tests at the appropriate grade level. Test results should be identified and coded on the student record as those of a student with limited English proficiency.
- **Clarification**: LEAs should think of exemptions in terms of the testing cycle (July 1 through June 30). No student should be exempted for more than **two** testing cycles. (Although there are no state-mandated tests in kindergarten through second grade, we begin counting testing cycles from the time of enrollment in that LEA.)
- **Example**: If a student enters an LEA in first grade, when would the student be required to be part of accountability testing? The student would be part of accountability testing in the third grade (first and second grade would be two testing cycles).
- *Although a student may be exempted because of limited English proficiency, the school system will need to assess the progress of these students using other assessment methods in order to show that students are progressing in English, as well as in their other subject areas.* ***After two school years, limited English proficient students must be included in all administrations of required state tests, regardless of their level of English language proficiency.***

Intermediate/High or Advanced English Proficiency

- A student whose documented English language proficiency has been assessed as Intermediate/High or Advanced will often be able to be appropriately tested on all subjects, although he/she may need to be exempted from tests in which he/she writes responses. A school system may exempt a student for up to **two school years.** All completed tests must be scored and included with the other tests at the appropriate grade level. Test results should be identified and coded as those of a student limited in English proficiency.

Superior English Proficiency

- A student whose documented English language proficiency is identified as Superior shall participate in all administrations of required state tests and will not be coded as limited English proficient for state tests.

Testing Modifications

All students should have equal opportunity when taking tests. This includes receiving instruction in becoming test-wise[1]. Student preparation for testing includes but is not limited to:

1. being taught the state-mandated curriculum (North Carolina *Standard Course of Study*);
2. being taught test-taking skills; and,
3. being informed about the purposes and possible consequences of tests that will be administered (for example, passing the competency test is a graduation requirement).

In addition to becoming "test-wise," students who are limited English proficient may need to have special modifications. Any special arrangements or modifications must be in accordance with rules and procedures that protect test standardization procedures and the validity of the assessment.[2] **Special arrangements or modifications must never be used for score enhancement.**

In determining appropriate testing modifications, a fundamental principle is to follow the type of instructional modifications used in the classroom. Modifications that are not routinely used during the instructional day and during classroom testing are not appropriate during state-mandated testing. A good guideline is to "test the way you teach." For example, students who habitually need extended time for classroom assignments and tests will probably need extended time for state-mandated tests. Students may receive multiple test modifications if these modifications are part of routine instruction and testing for the student. Modifications used during classroom instruction and state-mandated testing should be documented.[3]

The North Carolina Statewide Testing Program allows for the following procedural modifications for certain limited English proficient students and certain tests:

- Testing in a Separate Room
- Scheduled Extended Time
- Multiple Test Sessions
- Test Administrator Reads Test Aloud in English
- Student Marks in Test Book
- English/Native Language Dictionary or English/Native Language Electronic Translator

All test administrators who provide modifications must be trained prior to the test date in the (a) appropriate use of modifications, (b) appropriate procedures for modifications, and (c) the *Testing Code of Ethics*. (See a copy of the *Testing Code of Ethics* in the Appendix.)

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[1] The *Testing Code of Ethics* provides additional information on fair and ethical testing practices, which includes preparing students to take tests.

[2] For example, reading tests may not be read aloud. Calculators may not be used for "calculator-inactive" sections of mathematics tests.

[3] The local school system will designate the manner in which each school should provide documentation for modifications for limited English proficient students.

Testing In A Separate Room

Due to their level of language proficiency, some limited English proficient students need to use much greater concentration for longer periods of time for testing. This may require that they be tested in a different setting. The use of testing modifications should be consistent with those modifications used during instruction and classroom tests.

Description

Every student must be provided with a quiet, well-lighted area in which to take tests. In some cases, students may need to be tested separately. This modification provides the student with the opportunity to be tested in a smaller group.

Considerations and Instructions

- This modification is allowed for all state-mandated tests.
- Test security must be maintained at all times.
- The test coordinator should assist in locating a separate room for testing.
- The test should be administered as stated in the regular test administration script unless other modifications which require modified procedures are used.

Collection, Storage, and Processing of Test Materials

- If another modification which requires special handling is used in conjunction with this modification (e.g., "Student Marks in Test Book"), the school system should refer to the section that describes the other modification in this document for processing test materials.
- The school system should follow the standard procedure for the collection, storage, and processing of test materials if special handling is not required.

Scheduled Extended Time

All students are allowed up to a maximum of fifteen minutes of extra time during the administration of state-mandated tests. The extra fifteen minutes can often be accomplished during the time at the end of the testing period while the test administrator collects test materials. Due to their level of language proficiency, some limited English proficient students need to use much greater concentration for longer periods of time for testing. The use of testing modifications should be consistent with those modifications used during instruction and classroom tests.

Description

The schools may determine that students who are limited English proficient need additional time to complete their test beyond that recommended in the *Test Administrator's Manual*.

Considerations and Instructions

- This modification is allowed for all state-mandated tests.
- Any extension of time should occur at the end of, or immediately following, the planned testing session during the scheduled test day.
- Special arrangements may be needed prior to the test administration to accommodate extensions to the usual testing schedule.
- Test administrators will need to work with their test coordinator to determine whether the student should be tested in the same room for the whole testing session or whether the student should be tested with his/her regular classmates, then moved to a different setting.
- When reading the instructions from the regular test administration script, the test administrator should omit information regarding time limits.

Collection, Storage, and Processing of Test Materials

- If another modification which requires special handling is used in conjunction with this modification (e.g., "Student Marks in Test Book"), the school system should refer to the section that describes the other modification in this document for processing test materials.
- The school system should follow the standard procedure for the collection, storage, and processing of test materials unless special handling is required.

Multiple Test Sessions

All North Carolina tests are aligned with the *Standard Course of Study* and are designed so that most students will have enough time to finish the tests. Due to their level of language proficiency, some limited English proficient students need to use much greater concentration for longer periods of time for testing. The use of testing modifications should be consistent with those modifications used during instruction and classroom tests.

Description

A multiple test session modification provides the student with the opportunity to take a state-mandated test over several sessions. The sessions may be extended over several days. Every effort should be made to complete the test administration as close to the school's test schedule as possible in order to maintain test security.

Considerations and Instructions

- This modification is allowed for all state-mandated tests.
- It should be documented that the student uses multiple sessions routinely during classroom testing. Special arrangements may be needed to accommodate multiple test sessions.
- When reading the instructions from the regular test administration manual, the test administrator should omit any information regarding time limits. Otherwise, the standard instructions located in the manual should be followed.
- There are several ways that this modification can be provided. The final decision should be based on the specific needs of the student. For example:
    * It may be appropriate for the student to begin the test on the scheduled date and to complete the test on the make-up day.
    * Another alternative is to test the student for a specified time period (e.g., twenty minutes), allow the student to take a break (e.g., eight minutes), test again for a specified time period, etc. Test security must be maintained at all times.
- Students should not be allowed to review questions from a previous session or questions for a future session. Paper clips may be used to secure those pages already completed or planned for future sessions. Students should be reminded that they may not return to test questions at the next session.

Multiple Test Sessions (cont.)

Collection, Storage, and Processing of Test Materials

- If another modification which requires special handling is used in conjunction with this modification (e.g., "Student Marks in Test Book"), the school system should refer to the section that describes the other modification in this document for processing test materials.

- The school system should follow the standard procedure for the collection, storage, and processing of test materials.

Test Administrator Reads Test Aloud in English

Description

The test administrator may read aloud **in English** non-reading sections of tests exactly as they are written. The test administrator may read these sections the number of times necessary for the student to comprehend the questions. **At no time may the test administrator paraphrase or translate the test instructions or items.** The use of testing modifications should be consistent with those modifications used during instruction and classroom tests.

Considerations and Instructions

- The North Carolina End-of-Grade Tests: Reading Comprehension (grades 3-8), and the North Carolina End-of-Course English I test **may not be read aloud** since components of these tests measure reading skills.

- The read aloud modification is not allowed on the North Carolina Competency Test of Reading (new competency test).

- The "Test Administrator Reads Test Aloud" modification is not available for the North Carolina Minimum Competency Tests because of the "audio-cassette" modification. The audio-cassette may be used for those students needing the "read-aloud" modification. It is available for the North Carolina Minimum Competency Tests (old competency test) only.

- The test administrator should review the regular test administration procedures in the manual prior to the test administration day and omit general directions that are not applicable for this modification. Test administrators may read any Student Survey and sample questions aloud to the students and fill in the bubbles to indicate responses.

- The test administrator should have a copy of the test in order to read the instructions and questions to the students.

- The directions for most state tests may be read aloud. The 1-4 sentence "directions" located before passages printed in the test books of the End-of-Grade reading multiple-choice tests and the new Competency tests in reading may not be read to students. These test "directions" are more accurately referred to as "frames." They may not be read aloud because they provide some information regarding the passage.

- The two example pages located in the End-of-Course English I Test may be read aloud since they provide students with the opportunity to practice examples prior to taking the test. However, specific passages, test items, and answer choices from the End-of-Course English I Test may not be read aloud.

- If more than one student in a certain grade level needs to have the test read aloud, the entire group should be administered the same test form. The school should notify the test coordinator several months in advance of testing that the

Test Administrator Reads Test Aloud in English (continued)

same form is to be administered to a group of students so that the test coordinator can order the appropriate number of materials.

- The test administrator should repeat the instructions and test questions (not reading tests) as many times as necessary for the students to understand and respond. Since it is documented that the student is to receive this modification, the test administrator should read all test items and choices (except for reading tests) aloud.

- Test administrators should read **each test item** aloud to the student(s). Test administrators should also read the sample questions aloud. For word(s) located on a map, table, etc. (not reading tests), the test administrator may either (a) read all words to the student at one time or (b) inform the student that the information can be read aloud upon the student's request. This decision should be based on individual student needs.

Collection, Storage, and Processing of Test Materials

- No special processing is required for the "read aloud" modification. If this modification is used in conjunction with a modification requiring special processing, then the special instructions for the other modification should be followed.

    * Example: When using the "read aloud" modification in conjunction with "marking in test book," the answers must be transcribed to the answer document.

Student Marks In Test Book

Description

This modification allows students to mark directly in the test book. This modification is available for students coming from languages with different orthographic systems (written alphabet systems). The use of testing modifications should be consistent with those modifications used during instruction and classroom tests.

Considerations and Instructions

- This modification is available for all state-mandated tests.
  Note: Students mark directly in the test books for essay and open-ended tests as part of the regular test administration procedures.
- The test administrator should review the information regarding the regular test administration. When using this modification while testing in a separate room, the directions for filling in the bubbles for the student's name and other background information should not be read aloud. The test administrator should complete the background information in advance of testing. The test administrator may read any Student Survey aloud to the student and fill in the bubbles to indicate responses.
- The test administrator should review the regular test administration procedures in the manual prior to the test administration day and omit general directions that are not applicable for this modification (e.g., asking students to locate the appropriate section of the multiple-choice answer sheet).
- For multiple-choice tests, the answers must be transcribed to a standard answer document. The transcription must be checked for accuracy by another school official. Only responses on regular multiple-choice answer sheets will be scored.

Collection, Storage, and Processing of Test Materials

- It is important that each student's full name is on the cover of the test books and that the name *uniquely* identifies the student.
- The test book should be stored locally for 6 months, following the return of test scores. In the case of a missing answer sheet or a request for a score verification, the original test document can be retrieved and rescored.
- At the end of the six-month period and after the inventory records are complete, these test materials can be securely destroyed.

English/Native Language Dictionary or Electronic Translator

Due to their level of language proficiency, some limited English proficient students use an English/native language dictionary or an English/native language electronic translator during classroom instruction and tests. An English/native language dictionary or an English/native language electronic translator may be used for these students during state-mandated testing provided the following requirements have been met:

1. The dictionary or translator is a **word-to-word** English/native language dictionary or electronic translator (no definitions).
2. The dictionary may not contain written notes, formulas, etc.
3. The dictionary or electronic translator has been approved by designated personnel in the local school system.[4]

Description

English/native language dictionaries or English/native language electronic translators may be used to assist the limited English proficient student to translate an unknown word.

Considerations and Instructions

- This modification is appropriate for all state-mandated tests.
- Caution: Due to the limited database, the electronic translator may give inappropriate language-to-language translations.
- This modification is available for those students who use an English/native language dictionary or electronic translator during classroom instruction on a regular basis.
- Use of a dictionary or electronic translator that is not approved may result in a misadministration.
- Because the purpose of providing an English/native language dictionary is to decrease the language barrier, **it is inappropriate to provide a regular English dictionary because it does not provide translations.**
- **Use of an English dictionary during state-mandated testing results in a misadministration.**

Collection, Storage, and Processing of Test Materials

- No special processing is required unless this modification is used in conjunction with another modification that requires special processing (for example, "Student Marks in Test Book").

[4] The approval of the designated school official means that the dictionary or electronic translator meets all of the specifications and may be used during state-mandated testing.

APPENDICES

Appendix A:	Home (Primary) Language Survey
Appendix B:	English Proficiency Level Descriptions
Appendix C:	Resources
Appendix D:	Testing Code of Ethics
Appendix E:	Annual Performance Goals (from *School-Based Management & Accountability Procedures Manual*)

HOME (PRIMARY) LANGUAGE SURVEY

To the ADMINISTRATOR: This survey should be administered **once** to every student enrolled in your local unit and maintained in the student's permanent record. **If the answer to any one of the questions asked is a language other than English**, the student will need to be reported on the annual Home Language Survey Summary and assessed further for appropriate placement and English language assistance. Young children may need to have the survey filled out by a parent or guardian. Because, in some cases, the student's parent or guardian may have limited English proficiency, it may be best to administer this survey in person rather than sending it home . Additional assistance may be needed from a translator or interpreter.

DATE _____

STUDENT _____
(Family Name) (First Name) (Middle Name)

GRADE _____ GENDER _____

SCHOOL _____

HOMEROOM
TEACHER _____

1. What is the first language you learned to speak? _____

2. What language do you speak most often? _____

3. What language is most often spoken in your home? _____

4. Besides language studied in school, do you speak any language other than English?

_____No _____Yes If Yes, list the language(s) _____

_____ _____ _____ _____

English Proficiency Level Descriptions

English Proficiency Levels	Novice Low	Novice High	Intermediate Low
Listening	No functional ability in understanding spoken English	Understands simple questions and statements on familiar topics if spoken very slowly and distinctly; often requires restatement in graphic terms.	Understands most questions, statements, and conversations on familiar topics spoken distinctly at normal speed; requires occasional restatement.
Speaking	No functional ability in speaking English	Able to satisfy routine daily speaking needs. Can ask and answer questions on very familiar topics. Speaking vocabulary is inadequate to express anything but the most elementary needs. Should be able to follow simple classroom directions.	Can handle with confidence but not facility most daily speaking situations. Can handle limited scholastic language requirements; will need help for most tasks. Limited vocabulary often reduces the students to verbal groping or momentary silence.
Writing	No functional ability in writing English	Able to copy isolated words or short phrases. Can write simple, memorized material with frequent misspellings and inaccuracies.	Sufficient control of writing system to meet some survival needs. Able to compose short paragraphs or take simple notes on very familiar topics grounded in personal experience. Evidence of good control of basic sentence construction and inflections such as subject/verb agreement; and straightforward syntactic constructions in present, past, and future time though errors occasionally occur.
Reading	No functional ability in reading English	Reads and understands simple narrative and descriptive text. Vocabulary for comprehension is limited to simple elementary needs such as names, addresses, dates, short informative signs (ex. street signs, no smoking, exit). Material understood rarely exceeds a single phrase and comprehension requires rereading and checking. Can recognize all letters in the alphabet. Detail is overlooked or misunderstood.	Sufficient comprehension to understand simple material. Can read messages, greetings, popular advertising, letters and invitations. Can guess at unfamiliar vocabulary if highly contextualized. Understands short discourse on familiar topics. Misinterpretation still occurs with more complex material. May have to read material several times.

English Proficiency Level Descriptions (cont.)

English Proficiency Levels	Intermediate High	Advanced	Superior
Listening	Understands most informal questions, statements, and conversation at normal speed; comprehends lectures on familiar subjects with some difficulty.	Understands most conversations and most lectures on familiar subjects at normal speed.	Understands academic topical conversation and most lectures with no difficulty.
Speaking	Participates effectively sometimes hesitatingly, in social and academic conversations; makes occasional errors in idiom and structure, often obscuring meaning.	Able to speak the language in most situations. Comprehension is quite complete for a normal rate of speech. Makes occasional errors in idiom and structure obscuring meaning.	Able to use the language fluently on all levels normal to school related needs. Can understand and participate in almost any conversation within the range of experience with a high degree of fluency.
Writing	Sufficient control of writing system to meet most survival needs. Can take notes in some detail on familiar topics, and respond to personal questions using elementary vocabulary and common structures. Can express fairly accurately present and future time. Can produce some past verb forms, but not always accurately or with correct usage.	Can write simple social correspondence, take notes, write summaries, and describe with factual topics. Still makes common errors in spelling and punctuation, but shows some control of the most common conventions. Able to join sentences in limited discourse, but has difficulty in producing complex sentences. Paragraphs are reasonably unified and coherent.	Able to use the written language effectively in most exchanges. Can write short papers and express statements of position, points of view and arguments. Good control of structure, spelling, and vocabulary. Can use complex and compound sentence structures to express ideas clearly and coherently. Still has problem tailoring writing to a variety of audiences and styles.
Reading	Able to read simple printed material within a familiar context. Can read uncomplicated prose on familiar subjects in frequently used sentence patterns. Some misunderstandings. Able to read the facts but cannot draw inferences.	Sufficient comprehension to understand most factual information in non-technical prose as well as some discussions on concrete topics related to special interests. Able to read for information and description, to follow sequence of events, and to react to that information. Is able to separate main ideas from lesser ones and to use that division to advance understanding. Can locate and interpret main ideas and details in material written for the general public.	Able to read standard newspaper items addressed to the general reader, routine correspondence reports and technical material in a field of interest at a normal rate of speed. Can gain new knowledge from material on unfamiliar topics in areas of a general nature. Can interpret hypotheses, supported opinions, and conjectures. Able to "read between the lines." May be unable to appreciate nuance or style.

Resources

English As A Second Language Resource Guide: A Handbook for Serving Limited English-Proficient Students, March 1995. This resource guide includes information related to identification and assessment, assessing for exceptionalities, program models, funding sources, instructional techniques, cross-cultural awareness, and materials and resources.

Administrative Information: North Carolina Statewide Testing Program for Grades 3-12, April 1996. This manual provides information on policies, procedures, and administration of state-mandated tests.

Testing Code of Ethics

for North Carolina Testing Personnel, Teachers, and School Administrators

Introduction

In North Carolina, standardized testing is an integral part of the educational experience of all students. When properly administered and interpreted, test results provide an independent, uniform source of reliable and valid information, which enables:

- *students* to know the extent to which they have mastered expected knowledge and skills and how they compare to others;
- *parents* to know if their children are acquiring the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in a highly competitive job market;
- *teachers* to know if their students have mastered grade-level knowledge and skills in the curriculum and, if not, what weaknesses need to be addressed;
- *community leaders and lawmakers* to know if students in North Carolina schools are improving their performance over time and how the students compare with students from other states or the nation; and
- *citizens* to assess the performance of the public schools.

Because standardized tests provide only one valuable piece of information, such information should be used in conjunction with all other available information known about a student to assist in improving student learning. The administration of tests required by applicable statutes and the use of student data for personnel/program decisions shall comply with the *Testing Code of Ethics for North Carolina Testing Personnel, Teachers, and School Administrators.*

Testing should be conducted in a fair and ethical manner, which includes:

Security
- ✔ assuring adequate security of the testing materials before, during, and after testing and during scoring
- ✔ assuring student confidentiality

Preparation
- ✔ teaching the tested curriculum and test-preparation skills
- ✔ training staff in appropriate testing practices and procedures
- ✔ providing an appropriate atmosphere

Administration
- ✔ developing a local policy for the implementation of fair and ethical testing practices and for resolving questions concerning those practices
- ✔ assuring that all students who should be tested are tested
- ✔ utilizing tests which are developmentally appropriate
- ✔ utilizing tests only for the purposes for which they were designed

Scoring, Analysis and Reporting
- ✔ interpreting test results to the appropriate audience
- ✔ providing adequate data analyses to guide curriculum implementation and improvement

Public Schools of North Carolina • State Board of Education • Department of Public Instruction
Division of Accountability Services/Testing
301 North Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-2825
Revised 1996

The *Testing Code of Ethics* is a guide to inform and remind those involved in standardized testing of their obligations to uphold the integrity of the North Carolina State Testing and Accountability Programs. This Code applies to all individuals involved in the testing process. Professionally responsible practice is conduct that arises from either the professional standards of the field, general ethical principles, or both. The importance of commitment and adherence to this code cannot be overstated when using test data as an element of decision-making.

Test Security

The superintendent (or designee) shall develop appropriate local policies and procedures to ensure maximum test security in coordination with the policies and procedures developed by the test publisher. The principal is responsible for ensuring test security within the school building.

1. Test materials shall be stored in a secure, locked area and distributed immediately prior to the test administration. Before each test administration, materials shall be carefully counted and distributed in an orderly manner. After each test administration, all testing materials shall be collected and counted immediately by the building level test coordinator. Materials shall be returned to a secure, locked area immediately following the test administration.

2. Only personnel who have a need should have access to test materials. "Access" does not mean school personnel have the right to review tests or analyze test items. "Access" is limited to the actual handling of materials. An example of a need to have access to test materials is for specific test modifications such as "signing the test" for deaf students.

3. Individuals who have access to secure test materials may not use that privilege for personal gain.

4. Test materials (both print and electronic versions, e.g., audio, video, and computer) shall not be copied, reproduced, or paraphrased in any way for any reason without the express written permission of the test publisher.

5. Personnel responsible for the testing program shall be properly instructed in test administration procedures, including administrations requiring procedural modifications. It is critical to follow all directions, as outlined by the test publisher.

6. **Any breach of security, loss of materials, failure to account for materials, or any other deviation from acceptable security procedures shall be reported immediately to the principal, building level test coordinator, school system test coordinator, and the state level test coordinator. The severity of the breach may result in disciplinary action, including, but not limited to, a letter of reprimand, suspension with pay, suspension without pay, or certificate revocation.**

Preparation for Testing

The superintendent is responsible for ensuring that the following activities occur throughout the school system.

Central Office

1. School system test coordinators must secure necessary materials.

2. School system test coordinators must plan and implement training for building level test coordinators, test administrators, and proctors.

3. School system test coordinators must ensure that each building level test coordinator and test administrator is trained in the implementation of procedural modifications used during test administrations.

4. School system test coordinators must, in conjunction with the appropriate program administrators, ensure that only appropriate test modifications are used and that proper documentation of the need is present.

Building Level

Principals are responsible for ensuring that the following activities occur within school buildings.

1. Building level test coordinators must maintain test material security and accountability.

2. Building level test coordinators will identify and train personnel, proctors, and "backup" personnel for test administrations.

3. Building level test coordinators and building administrators should encourage a positive atmosphere for testing.

Test Administrators

Test administrators must be school personnel who have professional training in education and are knowledgeable concerning the state testing program. Generally, teachers administer tests to their students.

1. All state tests are developed to assess the *Standard Course of Study*. A specific curriculum is typically broader than the *Standard Course of Study*. Instruction should go beyond the *Standard Course of Study* to meet the needs of the specific students in the class.

2. Teachers and other staff must be trained for each test they will administer.

3. Teachers should provide a positive atmosphere for testing by:

   ☑ encouraging students to do their best;
   ☑ providing a room that is quiet, comfortable, and has adequate lighting; and
   ☑ promoting a supportive atmosphere.

4. Teachers should help students to become test-wise by:

   ☑ helping students become familiar with test formats using appropriate curricular content;
   ☑ teaching students test-taking strategies and providing appropriate practice sessions; and
   ☑ helping students learn ways of preparing themselves to take tests.

5. It is appropriate to use approved resource materials such as test questions from test item banks, testlets and linking documents, etc., in instruction and test preparation.

6. Students and parents should be informed of upcoming tests, told what to expect, and made aware of any consequences of testing (e.g., passing the Competency Tests is a graduation requirement). Students with disabilities or students who are limited English proficient should be aware of their rights regarding procedural modifications for testing and the consequences for exemption from testing.

Individuals shall be prepared to administer and take tests ethically. Examples of unethical behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

   ☒ encouraging students to be absent on the day of testing;
   ☒ encouraging students not to do their best because of the purpose of the test;
   ☒ using secure test items (or modified secure test items) for instruction; and
   ☒ changing student responses at any time.

Administration

Each local school board should establish procedures to ensure proper test administration for all eligible students. Examples of unethical behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

   ☒ discouraging student attendance during testing;
   ☒ interpreting, explaining, or paraphrasing the test directions and/or the test items ;
   ☒ reclassifying students solely for the purpose of avoiding state testing;
   ☒ not testing all eligible students; and
   ☒ failing to provide appropriate modifications during testing.

Central Office

The superintendent or designee is responsible for the proper administration of each test, including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Assuring that each school establishes an appropriate set of procedures which ensures that all test administrations comply with test publisher guidelines.

2. Informing the local board of education of any breach of ethics.

3. Informing building level administrators of their responsibilities.

School Building Level

The principal is responsible for the proper administration of each test within the school, including the following:

1. Assuring that all school personnel know the content of state and local testing policies.

2. Implementing the school system testing policy and procedures and establishing any necessary school policies and procedures which assure that all eligible students are tested fairly.

Administration (continued)

3. Assigning trained proctors appropriately to test administration.

4 Reporting all testing irregularities to school system test coordinator.

Test Administrators and Proctors

1. Administering tests according to the directions in the administration manual developed by the test publisher. Special care should be taken when test modifications are provided.

2. Administering tests should be administered to all eligible students.

3. Reporting all testing irregularities to the school building test coordinator (both test administrator and proctor).

4. Providing an appropriate test-taking climate (both test administrator and proctor).

5. Proctors assist teachers in ensuring that testing occurs fairly by serving as an additional monitor.

Scoring

The school system test coordinator is responsible for ensuring that each test is scored according to specified procedures and parameters defined for the test by the test publisher in terms of the purpose and format of the test. Examples of unethical behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ☒ modifying scoring programs, including answer keys, equating files, and lookup tables and
- ☒ modifying student records solely for the purpose of raising test scores.

1. Quality control must be maintained during the entire scoring process (handling and editing of documents, scanning answer documents, and producing files). Factors to be addressed include, but are not limited to, accuracy, personal bias, and scoring consistency.

2. Security of tests and data-files must be maintained at all times and should include, but are not limited to, the following:

   - ☑ protecting the confidentiality of students and teachers at all times (i.e., data transfer, research studies, electronic files, printed materials) and
   - ☑ maintaining appropriate levels of test security regarding answer keys and item-specific scoring rubrics.

Analysis and Reporting of Results

A test score is one piece of information and should be interpreted in light of other scores and indicators. Test data can help to understand better patterns and practices in education. The superintendent is responsible for ensuring that test data is analyzed and reported appropriately and ethically. Examples of unethical behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ☒ using a single test score to make individual decisions and
- ☒ misleading the public concerning the results and interpretations of test data.

1. Test scores should be released to students, parents, legal guardians, teachers, and the media with appropriate interpretative materials as needed.

2. Staff development shall be provided that is appropriate and informative in order for personnel to feel competent to respond to questions related to testing, including the tests, scores, scoring procedures, and other interpretative materials.

3. Items and associated materials on a secure test are not public domain. Item analysis must be limited to items that are within the public domain.

4. Confidentiality of individual students and teachers should be maintained at all times. The reporting of individual names is not ethical. All research studies should be carefully reviewed for design and consequences.

5. A greater understanding of test scores used for decision-making may be achieved by appropriate data analysis such as:

   - ☑ disaggregation of data based upon student demographics or school homework policy;
   - ☑ examination of grading practices in relation to test scores; and
   - ☑ examination of growth trends and goal summary reports for state-mandated tests.

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE GOALS

§ 115C-105.28. Annual Performance Goals require the State Board of Education to set annual performance standards for each school.

Focus on Student Performance

As **required by law**, the focus on student performance in elementary and middle schools shall be in the basic areas of reading, writing (communications), and mathematics. At the secondary level, the focus shall be on student performance in the courses required for graduation and on other measures in the high schools as required by the State Board.

Each **school** is held accountable for the progress of its students. Therefore, the accountability system evaluated by the State Board will set annual performance goals for each school in the State and to measure the growth in performance of all students **in each individual school**.

Criteria for Standards

There are four criteria for setting performance standards using state-mandated tests.

1. Student growth standards should result in increased numbers of students at or above grade level.
2. Standards should be challenging, rewarding high levels of performance and growth.
3. Standards should be reasonable and achievable.
4. Standards should be fair.

Types of Standards

The State Board of Education has set two types of annual performance goals.

1. **Performance standards** refer to the absolute achievement or the percent of students in a school at or above grade level.
2. **Growth standards** are benchmarks set annually to measure a school's progress toward increasing the percentage of students at or above grade level (a year's worth of growth for a year's worth of school).

Expected Growth Rate	Also called reasonable growth, the expected growth rate is the amount of growth that would be reasonably expected over a year's worth of time. (See growth standard.)
Exemplary Growth Rate	Exemplary growth refers to growth that exceeds past practice and increases the proportion of students achieving at grade level. (See growth standard.)
Growth Standards	The primary goal of setting a standard is to ensure that students grow a year for each year in school; i.e., increase the percentage of students attaining at least Achievement Level III each year. The growth standard is a benchmark set annually to measure a school's progress toward increasing the percentage of students at or above grade level (a year's worth of growth for a year's worth of school). School growth is the expected growth rate for that school based on (1) its previous performance, (2) statewide average scores, and (3) a statistical adjustment which is needed whenever test scores of students are compared from one year to the next. All this information is placed in a formula that generates expected growth and exemplary growth using software called ABC Tools. Exemplary growth factors in 10 percent above the statewide average growth in the formula and is used in conjunction with the performance standard to identify schools that qualify for recognition and assistance. The State Board of Education established Achievement Level III as the standard for grade level proficiency for all students.
Students Included in Accountability Pool	To be included in accountability measures, students must have a pre-test score and a post-test score for grades three through eight for reading, writing, and mathematics, **and** have been in membership more than one-half of the instructional period. This means that students must be in membership in a school 91 of 180 days (regular schedules) or 46 days of 90 days (semester or block schedule). All students who were enrolled in a public school anywhere in North Carolina for the previous year are expected to have a pre-test score, unless the student has been exempted from testing.
Exemptions from Testing	Students and schools are accountable for student performance and achievement. All students should be given the opportunity to receive

instruction that will allow them to perform successfully on all state required tests.

It is expected that 100 percent of all students who are following the revised *North Carolina Standard Course of Study* and who are not eligible for exemption will take the state-mandated tests. **Blanket exemptions or exemptions for groups of students are not allowed.**

An answer document must be completed on every student in every school, including those students who are exempted from testing.

Exemption of Limited English Proficient Students

Limited English proficient students are not automatically exempted.

Limited English proficient students (appropriately identified and assessed) may be exempted from some or all testing for up to **two school years**, depending upon their level of English language proficiency. An exemption of a limited English proficient student begins at the time of enrollment in the district, depending upon the child's level of English language proficiency. See the *Guidelines for Testing Students with Limited English Proficiency, July 1996*, for more specific information.

The records on exemptions of limited English proficient students will be maintained at the school and LEA levels.

Exemption of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may be exempted on a case by case basis, if stated in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and if they are not following the revised *North Carolina Standard Course of Study*.

Students may be exempted from tests in one subject (such as writing) and allowed to take tests in the remaining subjects (such as reading and mathematics) for their grade level. These students will be included in the school's 98 percent tested requirement.

It is required that written consent for exemptions be obtained from parents, guardians, or students (if over 18). This statement must certify that it is understood that exemption from testing may mean that the student will not be eligible to receive a North Carolina high school diploma.

Alternative Assessment

Students who are exempted from testing must be given alternative assessments to demonstrate mastery of course or specific curriculum content.

Documentation

Schools and LEAs must maintain appropriate documentation on all exempted students. School records are subject to an audit.

Failure to Meet Testing Requirements

Several consequences will result if schools fail to comply with testing requirements.

- Schools that test fewer than 98 percent of **eligible students** will not receive school incentive awards. To determine the number of eligible students, subtract the number of exemptions from the number of students in membership.
- Schools that test fewer than 98 percent of eligible students for two consecutive years may be designated as low-performing by the State Board of Education.
- Schools are required to make public the percent of eligible students tested. Results for schools not meeting the 98 percent requirement will be noted in public reports.
- Schools with excessive exemptions in any year will not be eligible to receive recognition, rewards, and/or incentives.
- Schools with excessive exemptions for two consecutive years may be designated as low-performing by the State Board of Education.
- Low-performing schools may be targeted for assistance and/or intervention by the State Board of Education.

Special Populations/ Programs

Careful analyses of the data show that all schools do have a chance of meeting the exemplary growth standard.

- If limited English proficient students and students with disabilities have been represented in the school's population in the previous years and they were not exempted from testing, they are included when the school's growth rate is calculated.
- Alternative schools with assigned numbers are included in the accountability system of the ABCs plan the same as any other school. Programs and/or classes without a separate school number will have test scores reported in the students' home schools.

Composite Score

The composite score summarizes the performance of students in a school in reading, writing, and mathematics. It is used to determine whether a school meets its expected standard or its exemplary standard for incentive awards.

The composite gives a representative picture of a school's overall performance. In other words, a school could be below the exemplary standard for fifth-grade reading, but above the exemplary standard in other grades and subjects. Because the composite includes performance across all grades and subjects, the school could still reach the exemplary standard overall and therefore be eligible for incentive awards.

ABC Tools Software

The ABCs Tools software computes the sum of the differences between the exemplary growth and actual growth in each grade and subject. An overall writing index is also computed for grades four and seven. No scores have to be calculated manually. This software is provided to LEA testing coordinators by the Department of Public Instruction, Division of Accountability. The information and examples provided here are to assist educators and others in understanding the process for determining if growth standards have been met.

Calculating Growth

Step one in determining if the expected growth standard has been met is to calculate the index for writing for each of the most recent years and the overall writing index. Refer to the appendices for a complete example of calculating the writing index.

Review Standards

In **step two**, review expected and exemplary growth standards for reading and math at each grade level included in the State testing program (grades 3-8).

Determine Actual Growth

Step three is to determine the actual growth in reading and mathematics at each grade level. Use data on groups of matched students (cohort groups).

Difference in Growth

In **step four**, subtract the actual growth from the expected growth in reading and mathematics at each grade level.

Calculate Standardized Growth

In **step five**, divide the difference for reading, writing, and mathematics by the associated standard deviation at each grade level. *The ABC Tools software performs all of these calculations.*

NOTE: This step is very important. By dividing by the standard deviations, the resulting numbers are standardized to accommodate the different score types; i.e., developmental scale scores and the writing index. If only the differences were summed, the writing test would count considerably more than any other test in the composite. Once the difference in actual and expected growth is divided by the standard deviation, the resulting number is the **standardized growth score**.

Meeting Expected Growth

In **step six**, add the expected standardized growth scores for reading and mathematics at each grade level, 3-8, and for writing at grades 4 and/or 7. If the resulting number is 0 or above, the school has met the expected growth standard.

Standardized Exemplary Growth

Steps similar to steps four through six are used to determine the composite score for exemplary standards.

Step seven is to calculate the standardized growth scores for the exemplary standards.

- subtract actual growth from the exemplary growth standard in reading and mathematics at each grade level
- divide this difference in growth for reading, writing, and mathematics by the associated standard deviation at each grade level

Meeting Exemplary Standard

In **step eight**, add the exemplary standardized growth scores for reading and mathematics at each grade level, 3-8, and for writing at grades 4 and/or 7. If the resulting number is 0 or above, the school has met the exemplary growth standard.

Appeal of Growth Standards

In the event of compelling, catastrophic conditions within a school, the school may appeal growth standards to the State Board of Education. This process will require very specific reasons that the school's growth goals are unreasonable.

- The State Board of Education will appoint an Appeals Committee

comprised of principals, teachers, central office staff, superintendents, and local school board members to review written appeals from schools.

- Appeals must clearly document the circumstances which make the goals seem unrealistic.
- Appeals must be made by February of each academic year.
- The Appeals Committee will review all appeals and make recommendations to the State Board of Education. The State Board will make the final decision on the reasonableness of the growth goals.

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